

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 21, 2002 LB 946

you can balance the state budget. I take it that the business community's position is that we can't make the changes that are proposed to the business incentive programs as their contribution to a resolution of our budget, our fiscal problems. All right. That's only, I think, the starting point. The real question for us is whether or not we should, indeed, spread out the impact of our decisions and the impact of the resolution of our current fiscal problems, and, to me, that is quite a simple affirmative answer. If we have to make hard decisions, make them in as many...in as diverse of areas as we can so that we do not unnecessarily impinge any one single group, because if we gang up and make all of our decisions in one area, they will be much more serious and much more harmful than if we spread them around. Now this proposal, if you'll again refer to page 3 of the...of the handout that we prepared, you'll see this one generates \$25.6 million in the current biennium or \$24.6, I'm sorry, and in the subsequent biennium, can generate \$56 million. Now, are we doing that in the form of a tax? Yes, this is a surcharge, but is it a tax that you never get any benefit out of? No, the amount of the surcharge is carried forward, and the companies that had to pay the surcharge can eventually perhaps reclaim the surcharge so that all that they would have lost is the time value of their money, they, what they would characterize as their money anyway. They will say that they are unwilling to do that. They are unwilling to allow the state of Nebraska to use any of the proceeds of what they characterize as their contracts to resolve the state's fiscal crisis. I think, quite frankly, that's quite...that's unreasonable given the other difficult decisions that we will make, given the fact that I'm willing to suggest the property taxpayers pay more. How can the beneficiaries of this particular program in any kind of justice or sense of responsibility stand back and say, not me? I will not participate. I will not contribute, not me. Somebody else and somebody else to the tune of \$25 million in the current fiscal year, and somebody else the next two years to the tune of almost \$57 million. Somebody else, somebody else. I know that I have been a significant beneficiary of the state's policies. I'm very glad for that, but somebody else now. Somebody else. Don't ask me. Somebody else. The answer can't be somebody else. The answer has to be that you're a citizen, that you're a participant in the state, and that we have a